

HONORING THE 11TH ANNUAL AMERICA'S YOUNG HEROES CONTEST

HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the 11th annual America's Young Heroes contest, which honors students who have created visual art, film, poetry and essays to promote self-empowerment and combat bullying. These students have undoubtedly fostered more tolerant communities in South Florida as well as across the country, and I applaud their efforts.

Last year in the United States, nearly 5.7 million middle school and high school students were bullied. Even more tragic is the fact that almost one in five teens who were victims of bullying contemplated ending their own lives. America's Young Heroes provides a vital platform for teens to address these problems in a way that helps promote positive change.

I congratulate the organizers and participants of the America's Young Heroes contest for operating under the shared belief that in America, no child should be afraid to go to school because he or she is experiencing bullying. It is my hope that because of their efforts, we can work towards a future where all schools are a safe place for students to learn and grow.

RAOUL WALLENBERG CENTENNIAL ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 16, 2012

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the 100th anniversary of Raoul Wallenberg's birth. Raoul Wallenberg continues to be one of the most respected and courageous humanitarians to have sacrificed his life to save thousands of Hungarian Jews during the Holocaust.

Born on August 4, 1912 in Stockholm, Sweden, Wallenberg was a Swedish diplomat and a true humanitarian who creatively and courageously came up with measures to protect Hungarian Jews from persecution and death during the German invasion of Hungary during World War II. He hung Swedish flags in front of nearly 30 houses, declaring them Swedish territory—turning these “Swedish houses” into protected territory in which Hungarian Jews could seek shelter. He also distributed thousands of Swedish “protective passes,” even as some were in the midst of being deported, prompting their release from German authorities and saving their lives.

Posthumously, Mr. Wallenberg has been honored by countries throughout the world in numerous capacities. There are awards, streets, parks and schools named after him, countless memorials erected in his honor, and in 1981, Congress passed legislation to make him an Honorary Citizen of the United States. His life is celebrated annually on October 5th in more than a dozen states. His bravery continues to be an inspiration.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognizing the 100th anniversary of the birth of Raoul Wallenberg; may his courage serve as a guide to all of us who are committed to the protection of human rights.

REGARDING THE BEHAVIOR OF GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYEES

HON. SHELLEY BERKLEY

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly condemn reckless spending by a group of employees from GSA, the General Services Administration, whose actions are now the subject of multiple hearings in both the House and Senate.

The misuse of taxpayer dollars by these GSA employees is truly deplorable. And it comes at a time when families in Nevada and across our Nation are tightening their belts. The lesson from this outrageous incident is clear: government must spend every penny in ways that serve the American people's interests, not the interests of those entrusted with overseeing the use of these taxpayer resources.

President Obama has acted swiftly in demanding accountability from top GSA officials who failed in their leadership roles and I commend his response to the reckless GSA spending that has been revealed.

Unfortunately, some of the comments that have been made surrounding the GSA scandal are meant to create the impression that Las Vegas itself is part of the problem.

I want to make one thing clear to those looking to use these events as an opportunity to bash Las Vegas or to point fingers in our direction—Las Vegas is not to blame.

Mr. Speaker, it's not where GSA went, it's what GSA spent.

And the issue is not Las Vegas, it's the actions of certain GSA employees who must be held accountable for their stunning lack of good judgment, blatant disregard for cost and for thumbing their noses at the rules.

There is no better destination on Planet Earth for meetings, conferences, or conventions than my hometown. No city does it better than Las Vegas.

And the problem is not the men and women in my community who work in the tourism industry and who provide hospitality to tens of millions of visitors from around the globe each year. These moms and dads bring home paychecks from an industry that is vital to the economy of Las Vegas—the community I represent—and to cities all across Nevada.

So, while I join my colleagues in calling for a thorough investigation into this incident, I hope the focus will remain on the actions of GSA employees and their behavior, and not on the location where these misdeeds took place.

WORLD CIRCUS DAY—APRIL 21, 2012

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize April 21, 2012 as World Circus Day, a day of celebration when children of all ages celebrate the art, culture, and laughter of the circus. With over 40 countries celebrating, we recognize an art form that not only amazes and entertains, but also builds bridges between cultures and people across the globe.

In 2008, the World Circus Federation was created and established World Circus Day as an opportunity to celebrate circus culture and heritage.

The circus in America is a beloved and enduring art form. For over 200 years, the circus has entertained generations with amazing feats of physical skill, comedy, theater, and music, while exposing us to the cultures and wonders of the world.

Today's circus continues to amaze and inspire children of all ages by bridging generations and cultures in the pursuit of the very best in circus arts and skill. From St. Louis's own Circus Harmony working with urban youth, to the Galilee Circus which uses circus arts to bring Jewish and Arab children together, social circus exemplifies the very best of the circus culture as a means of creating friendships and understanding that transcends borders, economics, politics, and religion.

The great state of Florida is home to many of the best-known and longest-operating circuses in the country, including the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. and Circus Sarasota. Many of these famous circuses and the artists who perform with them call the 13th District of Florida “home.”

Known as “Circus City USA,” Sarasota boasts the world-renowned John and Mable Ringling Museum, the legacy of famed circus impresario John Ringling, whose vision for establishing Sarasota as a thriving cultural center is still alive today. Now under the stewardship of Florida State University, the Ringling Museum is home to a vast collection of European art and sculpture as well as its famed Tibbals Learning Center, home to the Howard Bros. Circus model—the largest miniature circus in the world.

Internationally recognized, our hometown Circus Sarasota is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and continuation of circus arts in our community. Founded by circus great Dolly Jacobs, daughter of famous Ringling Bros. clown Lou Jacobs, and partner Pedro Reis, Circus Sarasota's “Laughter Unlimited” program exemplifies the notion that “laughter is the best medicine,” reaching out to hospitals and senior centers to bring joy and comfort. Its annual circus performances showcase some of the finest circus talent in the world today.

Circus Sarasota is also home to the Sarasota Sailor Circus, in operation since 1949 and the oldest continuously running youth circus in America.

From the iconic Ringling Bridge across Sarasota Bay to the main thoroughfare Ringling Boulevard, the Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey legacy is also ever present. Beginning with John Ringling's decision to relocate